643. m. 12
12

# AN ESSAY ON POETRY:

BY THE

Right HONOURABLE,

THE

EARL of MULGRAVE.

The Second Edition.

*LONDON*,

Printed for *Jo. Hindmarsh*, at the *Golden-Ball* over against the *Royal Exchange* in *Cornhil*. M DC XC I.

# Typographus Lectori.

*CUM Paraphraſeos hujus forte manus in meas exemplar eſſet delatum, idque eruditis quibuſdam viris non uſquequáque diſpliceret, haud abs re noſtra alienum fore viſum eſt, ſi in Anglici exemplaris Editione hac alterâ, exterorum in gratiam, cum illo pariter typis mandaretur. Te verò, Lector amice, ſi bene quid de te merui, deprecatorem apud illuſtriſſimum Authorem adſciſco, ut auſum hoc æquo animo, & benigniorem in partem pro humanitate ſua dignetur interpretari.*

## *ERRATA.*

PAG. 1. lin. 1. dele , lin. 12. poſt *quæ* del. *ad*. p. 4. verſ. 2. poſt *ſupellex* del. ? p. 6. v. 29. pro *occurſent* lege *incurſent*. p. 10. v. 8. pro *lenita eſt*, leg. *lenitur*. p. 12 v. 5. pro *Elegia* leg. *Elegeia*. v. 21. pro *ſed*, leg. *ſin*. p. 14. nonus & decimus verſus communi charactere. p. 14. lin. ult. pro *indignans*, leg. *indignum* ! & pro *nec jam reminiſcitur alas* : leg. *celeres neque commovet alas*. p. 22. lin. 19. poſt *hîc* lege *operæ*, pro *operum*. p. 24. v. 11. pro *hinc inde inſpergat*, lege *inſpergat parcus*.

TENTAMEN

# TENTAMEN
DE
# ARTE POETICA,
AUTHORE
## Comite de MULGRAVE,
Regis nuper JACOBI II.

Hoſpitii Regii Camerario magno, à Secretioribus Conſiliis, &c.

---

E X

*Anglico Latinè Redditum, per* J. N. A. M.

# TENTAMEN
## DE
# ARTE POETICA.

INter opes varias queis mens, humana ſuperbit,
Fert primam rectè ſcribendi gloria, palmam:
Nec genus eſt ullum, ceu fructum, ſive laborem
Spectes, (laus magna, at magno molimine conſtat,)
Conferri ex minima quod poſſit parte Poeſi:
Tantùm extat, greſſuque artes ſupereminet omnes.
Sed procul à me ſit furor impius ille, profano
Scriptorum ut vulgo, pede ſi quis claudere certo
Verſiculos poſſit, tinnituque impleat aures
Barbarico, ſacri dem nominis hujus honorem.
Non vis plus juſtâ calefacti parte cerebri
Ignea ſuſciat, vani que ad fulguris inſtar
Perſtringitque oculos, medioque extinguitur ictu,
Ingenii verus vigor, ac vena æmula Solis
Æternùm nitet, ac proprio fulgore coruſcat;
Nunc ratium condit caput inter nubila, victor

Continuò

# AN ESSAY ON POETRY.

OF things in which Mankind does moſt excel,
Nature's chief Maſter-piece is *Writing well*;
And of all ſorts of Writing none there are
That can the leaſt with *Poetry* compare:
No kind of Work requires ſo *nice* a touch,
And if *well finiſh'd*, nothing ſhines ſo much;
But Heav'n forbid we ſhould be ſo profane,
To grace the *Vulgar* with that ſacred Name;
'Tis not a flaſh of *Fancy* which ſometimes
Dazling our Minds, ſets off the ſlighteſt Rhimes;
Bright as a Blaze, but in a moment done;
*True Wit is everlaſting, like the Sun*;
Which tho ſometimes behind a Cloud retir'd,
Breaks out again, and is by all admir'd.

*Continuò erumpit, mare, tellus, æthera rident.*

*Quò mihi* verborum, *aut* rerum *quoque lauta ſupellex?*

*Quò metrum, dulcique fluentes agmina verſus*

*Aſperior teneras uti nè vox raderet aures?*

*(Sunt* vulgi, *nec abeſſe feram, aut præſentia laudo)*

*Si* Genius *deſit, ſi non infuſa per artus*

Mens *agitet molem, & ſe corpore miſceat, ingens*

Naturæ *ſequitur ceu* nutum *machina Mundi?*

Entheus *ille calor percurrit ſingula, verbis*

*Major, & ingenio ſublimior, &* Genitorem

Cœleſtem *referens, oculis* impervius ipſe

*Cuncta* aperit, pingitque *omnes, neque* pingitur *ulli.*

*Nympha potens, hominum requies, divûmque voluptas,*

*Quàs habitas ſedes? cerebri num credere fas eſt*

*Anguſto hoſpitio* tantum *ſe includere* Numen?

*Quæve* proterva *fugis, multùm* aſpernata *vocantem*

*Cum te difficilem,* duramque *per otia ploro?*

*Unde redis? nec opinantem quâ lege reviſis,*

*Intentumque aliò, non dextro tempore cogis*

*Ad juga? tum pendent opera interrupta,* diei

*Languent* officia, *& ſperuntur gaudia* noctis.

*Sedatio jam — ſed* lenis *ades, cohibeque furorem:*

*Judicium ſine* natura *torpetque, jacetque;*

*Hæc ſine judicio tantùm eſt ſpecioſa* phrenetis.

Number, and Rhime, and that harmonious Sound,
Which never does the Ear with *Harſhneſs* wound,
Are *neceſſary*, yet but *vulgar* Arts,
For all in vain theſe ſuperficial parts
Contribute to the Structure of the whole
Without a *Genius* too, for that's the *Soul*;
A *Spirit* which inſpires the Work throughout,
As that of *Nature* moves the World about;
A *Heat* which glows in every word that's writ,
Tis ſomething of *Divine*, and more than *Wit*;
It ſelf unſeen, yet all things by it ſhown,
Deſcribing all Men, but deſcrib'd by none.
Where doſt thou dwell? What Caverns of the Brain
Can ſuch a vaſt, and mighty thing, contain?
When I, at idle hours, in vain thy abſence mourn,
O where doſt thou retire? and why doſt thou return,
Sometimes with powerful Charms to hurry me away
From *Pleaſures* of the Night, and *Buſineſs* of the Day?
Ev'n now too far tranſported, I am fain
To check thy Courſe, and uſe the needful Rein.
As all is *Dulneſs*, when the Fancy's bad,
So without *Judgment*, Fancy is but mad;
And Judgment has a boundleſs Influence,
Not only in the choice of *Words* or *Sence*,

*Judicio* acri *opus eſt, partes quod ſe addit in omnes,*
*Quod* mores *hominum, quod* res, *quod temperat* orbem,
*Nedum ut ſcribendi tenui in ratione gubernet.*
*Pluma velut calami, vel arundinis, illa volatum*
*Promovet, hoc acuit ferrum, vi, pondere donat,*
*Hæc* cordi *arrepit,* mentis *ratio occupat arcem.*
*In varias hic ut deſcribam carmina claſſes,*
* *Cum numeris, pedibusque* ſuis, *cœpti exigit ordo.*
*Sed quis enim ſanus velit hoc decurrere campo*
*Per quem magnus equos* ‖ Venuſini *flexit alumnus?*
*Illius auſpiciis ſcandas Helicona virentem,*
*Inſtruit exemplo qui vatem, moribus ornat,*
*Legibus emendat:* mendax *imitator, ut* Echô,
*Quid niſi verborum formas* manco *ordine reddit?*
*Solenne eſt, fateor, ſeniorum ſcripta profanâ*
*Compilare manu,* [*ſic vaſa argentea ſervi*
*Cum furto abſtulerint permutant* ſigna, notaſque,
*Proque* ſuis *jactant* ] *ſed quis ſibi cui pudor ac frons*
*Tam* miſeris *opibus tam inſigni fraude* placeret?
*Hoc jure &* Sophoclem *totum ſibi vindicet Actor,*
* Oedipodem *ſi tu tranſcripſeris Autor haberis,*
*Quantò is qui memori recitavit mente Theatro?*
*Verùm aliquos liquit vindemia plena racemos,*
*Fas etiam nobis acquirere pauca,* refixit
*Deſuetudo aliquas, tempus, nova crimina, leges*
Procudère *novas: ſic rerum* poſtulat *uſus.*
*Quid furto* hîc *Satyram, cui tot* patrimonia *paſcas?*
*Cùm vix ulla malis ſit terra feracior herbis?*
*Quot nec* Nilus *alit cùm occurſent undique* monſtra?
*Sed neque,* plebs vatum, *vobis* permitto timere,
*Nec* vacat, *aut* Satyræ *eſt morientes figere* muſcas:
*Deſtinat his operam, qui aliqua virtute* merentur,
*In melius flecti dociles, monitoribus æqui.*

* Progressus Tragœdia

Carminibus

But on the *World*, on *Manners*, and on *Men*;
*Fancy* is but the *Feather* of the Pen;
*Reaſon* is that ſubſtantial uſeful part,
Which gains the *Head*, while t'other wins the *Heart*.
*Here* I ſhould all the various ſorts of Verſe,
And the whole *Art of Poetry* rehearſe,
But who that Task can after *Horace* do?
The beſt of *Maſters*, and *Examples* too!
Ecchoes at beſt, all we can ſay is vain,
Dull the Deſign, and fruitleſs were the pain;
'Tis true, the *Ancients* we may rob with eaſe,
But who with that ſad ſhift himſelf can pleaſe,
Without an *Actor's* pride? A *Player's* Art
Is above his, who writes a *borrowed* part.
Yet *modern* Laws are made for *later* Faults,
And new *Abſurdities* inſpire new *Thoughts*;
What need has *Satyr* then to live on, *Theft*
When ſo much *freſh* occaſion ſtill is left?
Fertile our Soil, and full of rankeſt Weeds,
And Monſters, worſe than ever *Nilus*, breeds;
But hold, the *Fools* ſhall have no cauſe to fear,
'Tis *Wit* and *Senſe* that is the Subject here.
Defects of witty Men *deſerve* a Cure,
And thoſe who are ſo, will ev'n *this* endure.

Carminibus *primùm fervent* hîc *omnia*, *gaudet*
*Carmine quisque suo* Crispinus, Apolline *nullo*,
*Nec mora*, *nec requies*, *cuicunque est obvius usquam*,
Ignotum tristemve *petens*, *discrimine nullo*,
*Ense velut stricto* incurrit, *vimque* auribus *infert*.
*Hic multos* brevitas, speciesque *inducit hiantes*,
*Verum alius labor expertis*, *ac fronte videtur*,
*Nec* tenerum *magis est genus*, *aut* operosius *ullum*.
*Namque uti cum filo gemmas longo ordine nectis*,
(*Dilecta armillas*, *teretive monilia collo*)
Mendosas *numerus tegit*, *ac vicinia*; *fiat*
*Annulus*, *hoc* unam *ostentes*, *nubecula quaevis*
Apparet, *vitiumque oculis subjecta fatetur*;
*Sic nisi cuncta nitent in carmine*, *sordet*; *habenda*
*Verborum est ratio*, *ut ne* arcessita, *lociisque*
Mota, *minùs* propria, *aut immodulata*, trahantur.
Dictio *sit facilis*, *sublimis carmine* sensus,
*Ut neque* serpat *humi stylus*, *aut mens nubila capiet*.
*Cum sensum cum verba poliveris*, *altera cura est*
*Ut* lateat *labor*, & casus *ferat* artis *honorem*:
*Tale unum ostendas*, *& Phyllida solus habeto*.
*Praecipuè*, *& partes haec regula spectat in omnes*,
Foeda *procul* fugias, obscœnáque nomina; *scurra*
*Ingenio defectus ad hoc decurrit asylum*.
*Polluat ingenium sic Vates nobile*, serus
*Qui sapuit*, moriens *sic* spurca *volumina flevit*,
Ipsius *ut credam* censuræ *ignoscere Manes*.
*Non quòd circuitu blando* insinuata *voluptas*
*Displiceat* senibus, *moveat fastidia* castis:

*Verùm*

First then of SONGS, which now so much abound, Songs.
Without his *Song* no Fop is to be found,
A most offensive Weapon which he draws
On all he meets against *Apollo*'s Laws:
Tho nothing seems more easie, yet no part
Of *Poetry* requires a *nicer* Art;
For as in rows of *richest* Pearl there lies
Many a Blemish that escapes our Eyes,
The least of which *Defects* is plainly shewn
In some *small Ring*, and brings the value down;
So *Songs* should be to just *Perfection* wrought;
Yet where can we see one without a fault;
Exact *Propriety* of Words and Thought?
*Expression* easie, and the *Fancy* high,
Yet *that* not seem to *creep*, nor *this* to *fly*;
No Words *transpos'd*, but in such *order all*,
As, tho hard *wrought*, may seem by chance to *fall*.
Here, as in all things else, is most unfit
Bare *Ribaldry*, that poor *Pretence* to Wit;
Such *nauseous Songs* by a late Author made
Call an *unwilling* Censure on his *Shade*.
Not that warm Thoughts of the transporting Joy,
Can shock the *chastest*, or the *nicest* cloy;

*Verùm* immundities, *tanta eſt inſcitia, cœptis*
Officit *ipſa* ſuis, *congeſtum ut* inutile *lignum*
Obruit *inceptas cumulato* fomite *flammas.*
*Inſurgit graviore tono gravioribus aptus*
*Materiis* Elegus, virtutis *pangit honores,*
Ingenii, formæ *decus*; *& ſolatia* luctûs
*Exigua, heu!* ſpretos *quoties deflevit* Amores!
*Nequicquam, nam quæ lenita eſt fœmina verſu?*
*Mentis inops ſtolidos,* varios *mutabilis ipſa,*
*Abſurdos ſine* corde *ſonos, ſine* mente *figuras,*
(*Tetrior haud* Stygiis *peſtis caput extulit undis*)
Ultrò *ambit mulier,* mulier ſe agnoſcit *in illis.*
*Sed melius meritis laudi eſt cenſura nocentum,*
*Arrogat & pretium* vilis *plebecula* paucis:
*Quæ favet ingenio, quæ* vatem *cernit* inepto
*Æterno illam Elegus donabit gratus honore,*
Cedet Laura *loco, dediſcet fama* Corinnam.
*Sed quò tranſverſum, quæ nunc per* devia *raptas*
*Improbe Amor? ſine me ſpatiis decurrere captis.*
*Non equidem in genere hoc vel* vim *vel* verba *requiro,*
*Noſtratum hæc laus eſt, ſed adhuc majora caremus;*
*Flumineos quanquam vincas* dulcedine *cygnos,*
*Et proprios habeant vel* diſticha *cuncta* lepores,
(*Qualia plura, brevi peritura, per ora feruntur*).
Si junctura *deeſt, junctis ſi partibus* ordo,
*Altior it ſenſim, ni copula quæque priori,*
Ut *qui* fallenti *ſcandit viridaria* clivo,

*Nitenti*

But *obſcene* Words, too groſs to move Deſire,
Like Heaps of Fewel do but *choak* the Fire.
On other Themes he well deſerves our Praiſe,
But palls that Appetite he meant to raiſe.

Next, ELEGY, of *ſweet*, but *ſolemn* Voice, Elegy.
And of a *Subject grave* exacts the Choice,
The Praiſe of *Beauty*, *Valor*, *Wit* contains,
And there too oft deſpairing *Love* complains:
In vain alas, for who by *Wit* is moved,
That *Phœnix-ſhe* deſerves to be beloved;
But *noiſy Nonſenſe*, and ſuch Fops as vex
Mankind, take moſt with that *fantaſtick* Sex.
This to the Praiſe of thoſe who better knew;
The *Many* raiſe the Value of the *Few*.
But here, as all our Sex too oft have try'd,
*Women* have drawn my wandring Thoughts aſide.
Their greateſt Fault who in this kind have writ,
Is not Defect in Words, nor want of Wit;
But ſhould this Muſe harmonious Numbers yield,
And every Couplet be with Fancy fill'd,
If yet a juſt *Coherence* be not made
Between each Thought, and the whole *Model* laid
So *right*, that every *ſtep* may *higher* riſe,
Like goodly Mountains, till they reach the *Skies*;

Trifles

*Nitenti in plano ſimilis, ſimul ardua ventum eſt*
*Proſpectum attonito circumſpicit ore, ſtupetque*
Inſcius *ad tantum ſe perveniſſe* cacumen.
*Hoc* Epigramma *voces, des nomen quodlibet illi.*
*Non eſt artis opus, non eſt* Elegia, *quali*
*Flexiſti rigidum,* * *vates divine, tyrannum:*
*Infenſos* ‖ *alius proceres, Regemque ſuperbum*
*Colliculo in celebri manſura in fœdera traxit.*

* Panegyris Wallen Cromwellio dicata.

‖ Poema Dennamii equitis elegantiſſimum, Cropersbill dictum, prope Windſoram ubi celebris quæ vulgo Magna Charta vocatur, ſignata fuit.

*Ut Bellator equus ſonitum ſimul arma dedêre*
*Hûc proſultat, & hûc, micat auribus, & tremit artus,*
*Ipſum* equitem *terret tanquam excuſſurus in auras,*
Pindarica *attonitum ſic verſant* œſtra *Poetam:*
*Is* furor *eſt Muſæ cum implevit mentem animumque:*
*Æmulus hîc veterum* * *novus omnia puncta tuliſſet,*
‖ Pindarici *fontis qui non expalluit hauſtus;*
*Si non* vulgari *percuſſa, heu! verba* monetâ
Detraherent *pretium manſuræ in ſecula venæ.*
*Inſanire quidem* licet *hoc in carmine, verùm*
*Inſanire* decet *certâ ratione, modóque.*
*Vehementes ſenſus, liquido ſed flumine verba*
*Lucida procurrant; ſed hâc in parte ſeverus*
*Exactor videar,* naturâ *conſtat, &* auſu
*Hoc opus, ingenium campo dominatur aperto;*
*Et data* Pindaricæ, *ſumma indulgentia Muſæ.*

Pindarica.

* Couleius.

‖ Lemma præfixum Pindaricis Odis Couleii.

*Cùm neque* mos, *neque* lex, *torva aut* ſapientia *proſit,*
*Labenti in pejus* Satyra *ſuccurritur orbi:*

Satyra.

*Hæc*

Trifles like ſuch perhaps of late have paſt,
And may be lik'd awhile, but never laſt;
'Tis *Epigram*, 'tis Point, 'tis what you will,
But not an *Elegy*, nor Writ with Skill,
No * *Panegyrick*, nor a ‖ *Coopers-Hill*.

* *Waller's.*
‖ *Denham's.*

A higher Flight, and of a happier Force
Are * Odes, the Muſes moſt unruly Horſe;
That bounds ſo fierce, the Rider has no reſt,
But foams at mouth, and moves like one *poſſeſt*.
The Poet here muſt be indeed inſpired,
With *Fury* too, as well as *Fancy* fired.
*Cowley* might boaſt to have performed this part,
Had he with *Nature* joyn'd the Rules of *Art*;
But ill *Expreſſion* gives ſometimes *Allay*
To that *rich* Fancy, which can ne'er *decay*:
Tho all appear in Heat and Fury done,
The *Language* ſtill muſt *ſoft* and *eaſie* run.
Theſe Laws may ſeem a little too ſevere,
But *Judgment* yields, and *Fancy* governs there;
Which, tho extravagant, this Muſe allows,
And makes the Work much eaſier than it ſhews.

* Pindarick Odes.

Of all the Ways that wiſeſt Men could find
To *mend* the Age, and *mortifie* Mankind,

Satyr.

*Hæc docet exemplis animos, dum pectora mulcet,*
*Venam aperit* ridens, *& grato vulnere ſanat.*
*Dicta prius non hîc repetendum tollere paucos*
*Contentis ſolùm dilecto è corpore nævos.*
* *Huic non eloquium, non lecta vocabula curæ,*
*Materiam* rigidam *parili ſermone notanti;*
*Ille merum è plauſtro jactat pus, atque venenum;*
*Stultus utriſque labor; nunquam hæc te regula fallet,*
Ut Stylus, & cultus, ſit ſplendidus, atque virilis,
Læviaque immanes commendent carmina ſenſus.
*Si latrare ſatis, ſi rodere dente canino,*
*Quî* Satyrum *infami poteris dignoſcere* ſcurrâ?
*Aut iram ponas, aut diſſimulare memento,*
*Invitus videaris ad hanc deſcendere partem,*
*Occultaturi ſpeciem des crimina promens,*
*Sic rem conficias tanquam inter vina jocoſus*
‖ Arbiter, alta ſedent ludentis vulnèra dextræ.
*Sic ubi Rivalem ſpernis, vel laude malignâ*
*Effers, imponit probitas ſimulata puellæ.*
*Indivulſa comis hîc hæret laurea* * *vati*
*Stigmate qui* Bavium *nunſuro in ſæcla notavit:*
*Ille olim* ‖ felix alieno *vulnere, eundem*
*Et Satyris* propriis *quandóque meretur honorem.*
Pegaſus *aſt humiles ſi ſe ſummittit ad uſus*
*Serpit humi, indignans, nec jam reminiſcitur alas.*

* In Satyra verborum & numerorum ratio habenda.

‖ Petronius.

* Dr——nus celeberrimus Poeta Anglus, in Satyra facile princeps.

‖ Falsò ſuſpectus, vulneratus, & laudatus ob Poema Satyricum cujus revera auctor non fuit.

*Jamque*

SATYR well writ has moſt ſucceſsful prov'd,
And *cures*, becauſe the *Remedy* is *lov'd*.
'Tis hard to write on ſuch a Subject more,
Without repeating Things ſaid oft before.
Some vulgar Errors only we remove,
That ſtain a *Beauty* which ſo much we love.
Of well *choſe* Words ſome take not care enough,
And think they ſhould be as the Subject *rough*;
This great Work muſt be more exactly made,
And *ſharpeſt* Thoughts in *ſmootheſt* Words convey'd:
Some think, if ſharp enough, they cannot fail,
As if their only Buſineſs was to *rail*;
But human Frailty *nicely* to unfold,
Diſtinguiſhes a *Satyr* from a Scold.
Rage you muſt hide, and Prejudice lay down,
*A* Satyr's *Smile is ſharper than his Frown*;
So, while you ſeem to *ſlight* ſome Rival Youth,
Malice it ſelf may paſs ſometimes for Truth.
The * *Laureat* here may juſtly claim our Praiſe,
Crown'd by || *Mac-Fleckno* with immortal Bays;
Tho *prais'd* and *puniſh'd* for another's * Rhimes,
His own deſerve as great Applauſe ſometimes;
But once his *Pegaſus* has born *dead Weight*,
Rid by ſome *lumpiſh* Miniſter of State.

* Mr. *D—n*.

|| A famous Satyrical Poem of his.

* A Libel, for which he was both applauded and wounded, tho intirely innocent of the whole matter.

Here

*Jamque opus emensos mediâ plus parte Quadrigas*
*Siste parùm; major rerum tibi nascitur* ordo :
*Ut de Caucasei Jovis ales vertice saxi,*
*Sive fames jubet, aut cœli inclementia sedes*
*Explorare novas, tepidúmque invisere* Solem ;
*Longum iter, & pennis luctantes cogitat Austros,*
*Metiturque oculis spatia, & circumspicit alas;*
*Mox ubi propulerit vigor, & nova gloria cœpti,*
*Indignans terram repulit, jam jamque videri*
*Desiit, & nimbos superans latet æthere toto :*
*Sic, impar licet, aggreditur Musa aspera dictu,*
*Invidiam* * *cathedris, odium motura Poetis;*
‖ *Illis ira modum supra est, læsique venenum*
*Morsibus inspirant, sed quis succenseat æquus*
*Frænanti audaces, dociles meliora monenti?*
*Quin age & insanis paulum adsis, diva,* Theatris.
*Principio, veteres quæ præcepêre Magistri*
*Ut persona, locus, res, hora cohæreat aptè,*
*Sunt hæc nota satis, sed, quæ infortunia Legum,*
*Observata parùm, ad communia scripta relego,*
*Sat nostros vix tacta aliis monuisse Britannos.*
† *Si visum ut* solus *quid secum disserat* Actor,
*Sit breve, sit graviter commoti; ita flagitat usus*
*Communis vitæ; noster, cùm desit Achates,*
*Arcanos gestit podio omni credere sensus :*

* Remittit Horatius Demetrium Tigellium ad Discipularum Cathedras.
‖ Dictum de apibus apud Virgilium.
† De soliloquiis ut brevis, & rara sint.

Nec

Here reſt, my *Muſe*, ſuſpend thy Cares a while,
A greater Enterpriſe attends thy Toil;
And as ſome *Eagle* that deſigns to fly
A long *unwonted* Journey through the Sky,
*Conſiders* all the dangerous way before,
Over what *Lands* and *Seas* ſhe is to ſoar,
*Doubts* her own Strength ſo far, and juſtly *fears*
That lofty Road of *Airy Travellers*;
But yet incited by ſome fair Deſign,
That does her *Hopes* beyond her *Fears* incline,
Prunes every Feather, views her ſelf with Care,
At laſt *reſolved*, ſhe cleaves the yielding Air,
Away ſhe flies, ſo ſtrong, ſo high, ſo faſt,
She *leſſens* to us, and is *loſt* at laſt.
So (but too weak for ſuch a weighty thing)
The Muſe inſpires a ſharper Note to ſing;
And why ſhould Truth offend, when only told
To guide the *Ignorant*, and warn the *Bold*?
On then, my Muſe, adventrouſly engage
To give Inſtructions that concern the Stage.

The *Unities* of Action, Time, and Place, Plays.
Which, if obſerved, give PLAYS ſo great a Grace,
Are, tho but little *practis'd*, too well *known*
To be taught here, where we pretend alone
From *nicer* Faults to purge the preſent Age,
Leſs obvious Errors of the *Engliſh* Stage.

Firſt then, SOLILOQUIES had need be few,
Extremely *ſhort*, and ſpoke in *Paſſion* too;
*Our* Lovers talking to themſelves for want,
Of others, make the *Pit* their *Confidant*;

*Nec refert, si sub specie narrantis* amico,
*Enarret* nobis; *fluere ex* re *occasio debet,*
*Ut* tandem *miseros cùm* Phædra *fatetur Amores.*

De Figuris & Metaphoris.

*Exultat bona pars* juvenilibus *usque figuris,*
*Naturam spernunt, spernit Natura vicissim,*
*Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga* fuci:

|| Is locus est ferè solum in Descriptionibus.

|| *His locus est cum tristem hyemem, fluviosque rapaces,*
*Aut lucum, & rivos, vel amœna rosaria* pingis.
*Sed cùm* declamat summus dolor, ira perorat,
*In numerum* cantat spretus, moribundus *Amator,*
*Quem non hæc lapidem moveant? quàm* flebilis Heros,
*Vitam exhalanti cui jam* vacat *esse* diserto?
*Dicta seni in* cymba *jacit importuna* Charonti.

* Objectio.

* *Verùm in Colloquiis cornicum lumina figunt.*

|| Rép.

|| *Tùm verò* ludit rabies, luctusque cachinnat:
*Utque vices variant* pueri *super ære canoro,*
*Sive lubet magis ex compactâ subere plumâ,*
*Illa volat, volitatque, volat volitatque per auras,*
*Itque reditque viam* toties, *stupet* inscia *turba,*
*Impubesque manus, mirata volatile* suber;
*Mutua sic* Tragici *ludunt: quis talia spectans*
*Temperet è* plausu! *sed quo vos nomine dicam*
*Naturæ, ac sanis jurati sensibus hostes?*

* Ironicè.

* *Fac, actor,* rythmo immoriare *Tragœdia* bella *est:*
Communis sensûs *cùm sit scintillula, mille*
*Artibus ac miserum liceat cùm extundere victum,*
*Quæ versant* furiæ, *ut* mendica infamia *vobis,*
*Ut* contempta fames *placeat? quæ plurima turba*
*Ignorant olei quanti* drama, *atque laboris:*
*Ingenii felix, verborum flumine puro,*
*Qui legit* veteres, aulam *perspexit, &* urbem,
*Quin &* Naturæ *rimans penetralia sensus*
*Eruit arcanos,* nováque *hinc miracula promit:*

*Ille*

Nor is the matter mended yet, if thus
They truſt a Friend, only to tell it us;
Th' occaſion ſhould as *naturally* fall,
As when ‖ *Bellario* confeſſes all.

FIGURES of Speech, which Poets think ſo fine,
Art's *needleſs* Varniſh to make Nature ſhine,
Are all but *Paint* upon a beauteous Face,
And in *Deſcriptions* only claim a place.
But to make *Rage declaim*, and *Grief diſcourſe*,
From Lovers in deſpair *fine* things to *force*,
Muſt needs ſucceed, for who can chuſe but pity
A *dying* Hero miſerably *witty*?
But, oh, the Dialogues, where jeſt, and mock
Is held up like a Reſt at Shittle-cock!
Or elſe like Bells, eternally they chime,
They *ſigh* in *Simile*, and *die* in *Rhime*.
What *Things* are theſe who would be, *Poets* thought,
By *Nature* not inſpir'd, nor *Learning* taught?
*Some* Wit they have, and therefore may deſerve
A better Courſe than this by which they *ſtarve*:
But to write Plays! why 'tis a bold pretence
To *Judgment*, *Breeding*, *Wit* and *Eloquence*;
Nay more; for they muſt look *within* to find
Thoſe *ſecret Turns* of Nature in the mind;

‖ In *Philaſter*, a Play of *Beaumont* and *Fletcher*.

Without

*Ille onus hoc lætus ſubeat, ſperetque* repoſci,
*Invidiam ſpernat,* Criticis *medium exerat unguem.*

[illegible]

‖ *Ut rectè, ut propriè roget, ac reſpondeat Actor,*
Socraticæ *ſolæ poterunt oſtendere chartæ:*
*Tantùm non latuit* Romam *ars, vix cognita noſtris,*
*Nequicquam obnixis vitioſo* emergere ſèclo.
*Hic tamen, ut patriæ meritos ſolvamus Honores,*
*Dirigit obſcuros vatûm* † *par nobile greſſus,*
*Sublimes, quantùm non noxia tempora* tardant,
*Incultique* hebetant *mores,* perituraque *lingua:*
*Feſſa tamen recreant* alienis *pectora curis,*
*Vel* ‖ Craſſo *excutiant riſum lachrymáſque* † Catoni.
*Nocturnâ hos verſate manu, verſate diurnâ,*
*Spectate interdum, ſeris legite inde lucernis,*
*Æra periti auro,* tumidumque *abſcindere* ſòldo.

[illegible] apud Anglos.

Quinunquam riſiſſe perhibetur, & inde cognomentum habuit.

† Veritum Stoicis flere.

De Fabula.

FABULA *contulerit multûm meditata potenter,*
*Illecti hâc ſolâ nonnunquam* aulæa *manemus.*
† *Stoica ſollicitam neu ludant ſomnia mentem,*
*Ut tibi* perfectè ſapiens, *fortíſve, bonúſve,*
*Ponatur: laudi eſt* Picturæ, *ſive* Poeſi,
*Naturæ neſcire* modum? *facit ille* Gigantem,
*Non* hominem, *ignotum terris, &* amabile monſtrum.
*Denique tale nihil peperit Natura; ſubeſſe*
*Culpam opus eſt: ut nè* immeritò *cecidiſſe feratur,*

† Non quærendi ſunt perfecti Characteres, Stoicorum in morem, qui nullum omnino nævum ſapienti ſuo ineſſe patiuntur.

Sed

Without this part in vain would be the whole,
And but a Body all without a Soul:
All this together yet is but a part
Of Dialogue, that great and powerful Art,
Now almoſt loſt, which the old *Grecians* knew,
From whence the *Romans fainter* Copies drew,
Scarce comprehended ſince but by a *few*:
*Plato* and *Lucian* are the beſt Remains
Of all the Wonders which this Art contains;
Yet to our ſelves we Juſtice muſt allow,
*Shakeſpear* and *Fletcher* are the Wonders now:
Conſider them, and read them o'er and o'er,
Go ſee them play'd, then read them as before,
For tho in many things they groſly fail,
Over our Paſſions ſtill they ſo prevail,
That our *own* Grief by theirs is rock'd aſleep,
The *Dull* are *forc'd* to feel, the *wiſe* to *weep*.
Their Beauties imitate, avoid their Faults;
Firſt on a *Plot* employ thy careful Thoughts;
Turn it with time a thouſand ſeveral Ways,
This oft alone has given ſucceſs to Plays:
Reject that *vulgar Error* which appears
So *fair*, of making *perfect* Characters;
There's no ſuch thing in Nature, and you'll draw
A *faultleſs Monſter*, which the World ne'er ſaw;
Some *Faults* muſt be, that his Misfortunes drew,
But ſuch as may deſerve Compaſſion too.

*Sed* lapſus, *veniâ, & lachrymis, digniſſimus, Heros.*

*Nec ſatis eſt tota ut recto ſtet Fabula talo,*
De Scenæ apparatu. *Scit Scenæ teneræ* ſua *Fabula: divitis Horti*
*Magnificam exornat velut* area *quæque figuram.*
*Multus & in parvis labor eſt; circumſpice partes,*
*Cuique repone* ſuas *veneres, in imagine prima*
*Ut vultûs ſignat veſtigia creta futuri.*
*Nec te pœniteat modulum diffingere, ſi res*
*Suadet, pars operæ eſt non parva* litura *Poetis.*
De Luminaribus quæ vocentur, Oculi ſcenæ. ‖ *Solliciti plures dicendi ubi* lumina *ponant,*
*(Purpureos longo collectos tempore pannos,)*
Perſonis *faciunt vim,* convenientia *mittunt,*
Facundè abſurdi; *te conſule ſedulus ipſum,*
*Quis ſenſus foret in* parili *tibi ſorte jacenti:*
*Quod petis,* intus *habes, fœcundum concute pectus.*
De Actoribus commendatis. * *Sit limata licèt tenuem comœdia ad unguem,*
*Non tamen hic operum finis; ſæpe actor agetur*
*Ipſe, docendus utì geſtum addat ſenſibus aptum;*
*Si piget ad tenues animum ſubmittere curas,*
*Immerita ingenuos occident Sibila Vates.*
De Charactere ſubinde mutato, ut ætatis, ſexûs, &c. veteris in novum, quod ſcenæ decorum. ‖ *Si nova difficili perſona addenda Theatro,*
*Non unum effingas* * *Criſpinum, ac ſimulator in* arctum
*Deſidias, ales proſtrata cadavera ſpernit*
Nobilis, *inſultat ferali carmine* bubo.
* Pro quovis vero. *Vulgare eſt Monſtrum deriſor ineptus inepti.*
*Verùm ut apes pictis in ſaltibus omnia libant,*
*Mel inde, hinc ceras, & miſcent utile dulci:*
*Perſonam ex multis ſic texas ſedulus unam,*
*(Eſt ſeges ampla ſatis,* vati & reſpondet avaro:)
* *Fert palmam hìc, ſenſa ut promam liberrima,* † *Miles,*
*Helluo, vanus, adulator, comes uſque facetus.*
*Illo gaudet eques,* vicies *repetitus amatur,*
*Vix anteacta parem, vix poſtera proferet ætas.*

Sæpe

Beſides the main Deſign compoſed with Art,
Each *moving Scene* muſt be a *Plot* apart;
Contrive each little *turn*, mark every place,
As *Painters* firſt *chalk* out the future Face;
Yet be not fondly your own Slave for this,
But change hereafter what appears amiſs.

Think not ſo much where *ſhining* Thoughts to place,
As what a Man would *ſay* in *ſuch* a *Caſe*.
Neither in *Comedy* will this ſuffice,
The *Player* too muſt be before your Eyes,
And tho 'tis Drudgery to ſtoop ſo low,
To him you muſt your utmoſt meaning ſhow.

Expoſe no *ſingle* Fop, but lay the Load
More *equally*, and ſpread the Folly broad;
The other way is *vulgar*, oft we ſee
A Fool *derided* by as bad as *he*;
*Hawks* fly at *nobler* Game; in this low way,
A very *Owl* may prove a *Bird* of *Prey*:
*Ill* Poets ſo will one poor Fop devour;
But to *collect*, like *Bees* from every Flower,
*Ingredients* to *compoſe* that precious Juice,
Which ſerves the World for *Pleaſure* and for *uſe*,
In ſpight of Faction this would Favour get:
But ‖ *Falſtaff* ſeems unimitable yet.

‖ An admirable Character in a Play of *Shakeſpear's*.

Another

*Sæpe & ſic venâ* rapitur *torrente Poeta,*
*Ingenii ut* fatuas *perſonas flumen* inundet:
Ruſticus Urbani *ſpeciem fert,* ſervus, honeſti,
*Non* ſua dicta *crepat,* ſubitóque *ut numine plenus*
Morio *quiſque* ſapit: *niſi quadrant dicta loquentis*
*Perſonæ, riſum moveas mihi forte, ſed ipſe*
*Rideris,* Scriptor: *curâ ipſa enaſcitur error,*

Modus dicteriis adhibendus.

‖ *Cùm ſalibus nimius laſſas onerantibus aures,*
*Sedulitate* urget, *movet ac* faſtidia *vates:*
*Exprimat ut* mores *caput eſt, tum deinde* Lepores;
*Hinc inde* inſpergat, *cum* lumine *miſceat* umbram.

Imago ridiculi Tragœdiæ recentioris.

*Sed quia quos fugiunt præcepta, exempla movebunt,*
*Ecce brevi in tabula, ne poſtera neſciat ætas,*
*Ora habitúſque virûm, noſtris quæ forma* poetis:
Inverſos *ſenſus, Scenæ ac portenta videre eſt.*
Lampades *ut primùm accenſæ, ac aulæa recedunt,*
*Soliloquus longùm* placido *ſermone* perorat,
*Et tenui eventus cunctos examine* librat:
*Conticuit ſimul is* tandem (quæ cura decoris)
*Ad* litui *ſonitum* fugitans *inducitur heros:*
*Obvius hîc* Nymphæ (miranda potentia fati!)
*Deperit intuitu primo, raſiſque dolorem*
Antithetis *probat, & turbati pectoris æſtus.*
*Cùm ſubito infelix caſus divulſit Amantes,*
*Ignotus nobis,* (ſcit vates omnia) *ſolus,*

Æger,

Another Fault which often does befall,
Is when the Wit of ſome great Poet ſhall
So *overflow*, that is, be none at all,
That all his Fools ſpeak *Sence*, as if *poſſeſt*,
And each by *Inſpiration* breaks his Jeſt;
If once the *Juſtneſs* of each part be loſt,
Well we may laugh, but at the Poets Coſt.
That ſilly thing, Men call *Sheer-Wit*, avoid,
With which our Age ſo nauſeouſly is cloy'd;
*Humour* is all, *Wit* ſhould be only brought
To turn agreeably ſome *proper* Thought.

But ſince the Poets we of late have known,
Shine in no *Dreſs* ſo much as in their *own*,
The better by *Example* to convince,
Caſt but a View on this *wrong ſide* of Sence.

Firſt a Soliloquy is *calmly* made,
Where every Reaſon is *exactly* weigh'd;
Which once perform'd, moſt opportunely comes
A *Hero* frighted at the Noiſe of Drums
For *her* ſweet ſake, whom at *firſt ſight* he loves,
And all in *Metaphor* his paſſion *proves*;
But ſome ſad Accident, tho yet unknown,
Parting this Pair, to leave the Swain alone,

*Æger*, Zelotypos *concepit protinus ignes:*
*Mox* (ut Rivali placeat) *juvat ire ſub umbras.*
*Sed priùs & Cœlos & conſcia Sydera teſtans,*
Abſenti *Nymphæ flammas longo ordine narrat:*
Rivalique ſuos *moriens commendat Amores.*
*Cùm* (monitu Jovis) *ille ſupervenit, & grave telum*
Serò *inhibet, caſúque animum perculſus acerbo,*
*Invidet* ignoto tam *pulchræ mortis Honorem;*
*Continuò incenſus fumantem corripit enſem,*
*Non illum flectet Genitor, dulcéſque* Hymenæi,
*Nec moritura ſuper crudeli funere* Virgo,
*Quin,* Heroo ictu, *media inter viſcera condat,*
*Vicit* Amor Lethi, plauſûſque *immenſa cupido.*
Fortunati ambo!
*Quænam hæc monſtra putem, non his opus humida laurus,*
*Sulphura cum tædis, dira ut portenta pientur?*
*Candidus hæc ubi commonui, quidam inſit ineptus,*
Object. *Deperit* Sic Veteres, *nos noſtraque lividus odit:*
(*Sic* Spectatores *luimus delicta* Poetæ.)
Reſponſ. *Tun' vitio affectum potes hunc mihi vertere? rectè*
*Judicium totâ cum de ratione Theatri*
*Vix niſi* ſana *ferat, ſtudio,* invidiâque *remota,*
Poſteritas? *oculos nam quæ menteſque morantur,*
*Saltator, cultus peregrinus, machina præceps,*
Italici *cantus, puerilis* nœnia *rythmi,*
(*Imbecilla nimis ruituri fulcra Theatri*)
*Langueſcunt; quid apud ſeros valitura nepotes?*
*Quondam etiam* illuſis *redit in præcordia ſenſus.*

Jam

He ſtreight grows *jealous*, yet we know not why;
And to *oblige* his *Rival*, needs will *dye*;
But firſt he makes a *Speech*, wherein he tells
The *abſent* Nymph how much his Flame excels,
And yet bequeaths her *generouſly* now
To that dear Rival whom he does not know,
Who ſtreight appears (but who can Fate withſtand?)
Too late alas to hold his haſty Hand,
That juſt has giv'n himſelf the cruel Stroke,
At which this very *Strangers* Heart is broke;
He more to his *new* Friend than Miſtreſs kind,
Moſt ſadly mourns at being left behind,
Of ſuch a Death prefers the pleaſing *Charms*
To *Love*, and living in a Lady's Arms.

How ſhameful, and what monſtrous things are theſe?
And then they rail at thoſe they cannot pleaſe,
Conclude us only partial for the *Dead*,
And grudge the Sign of old *Ben. Johnſon*'s Head;
When the *intrinſick* Value of the Stage
Can ſcarce be judg'd but by a *following* Age;
For Dances, Flutes, *Italian* Songs, and Rhime
May keep up *ſinking* Nonſenſe for a time.
But that may fail, which now ſo much o'er-rules,
And *Sence* no longer will *ſubmit* to Fools.

By

Poema Epicum.

*Jam tandem* Aonii *prærupta per ardua montis*
*Aerium laſſo juvat inſediſſe cacumen.*
*Secreti hic* Epici *Divûm potiuntur honore,*
*Luctanteſque infrà* tranquillo *lumine rident.*
*Quis dubitet cunctas* Epico *quin carmine vires*
*Exerat, ingenio metas figatque ſupremas,*
*Rerum* ſancta Parens, *cum poſt tentamina mille,*
*Innumeros* niſus *poſt temporis infiniti,*

Homerum & Virgilium.

*Vix tandem ediderit* binos? *ſacer horror in ipſis*
Nominibus, *neque enim eſt* ea *fas proferre profanis.*
*Quantùm* Atlas *nanum tranſcendit corpore, quanto*
*Delirus ſapiente relinquitur intervallo,*
*Tantum inter cunctos extat* par nobile *fratres:*
*Fama* ambit, Favor, *ac* plauſus *comitantur euntes.*
*Forte & in æterna jacuiſſent ſecula nocte*
*Inſcia quâ fierent arte hæc miracula, vaſtas*
Indus *uti pelago ſpectans innare carinas,*

* Criticus Gallicus celeberrimus.

*Si non* * Boſſutius *ſacros penetrare receſſus*
*Auſus, qui numeri, pandens, quis carminis ordo,*
*Unde parentur opes, & quâ virtute ſubacto*
*Semina miſſa ſolo caput inter nubila condant.*
*Certe aliquis Divûm, noſtro qui conſulit ævo:*
*Per* Labyrintheos *texit veſtigia flexus.*

Stratâ

By painful Steps we are at laſt got up
*Parnaſſus* Hill, on whoſe bright Airy Top
The *Epick Poets* ſo divinely ſhow,
And with *juſt Pride* behold the reſt below.
*Heroick* Poems have a juſt pretence
To be the utmoſt reach of human Sence,
A Work of ſuch ineſtimable Worth,
There are but *two* the World has yet brought forth,
*Homer*, and *Virgil*: with what awful ſound
Do thoſe meer words the Ears of Poets wound!
Juſt as a *Changeling* ſeems below the reſt
Of Men, or rather is a two-legg'd Beaſt,
So theſe *Gigantick* Souls amaz'd we find
As much above the reſt of human kind.
*Natures* whole ſtrength *united*! endleſs Fame,
And univerſal Shouts attend their Name.
Read *Homer* once, and you can read no more,
For all things elſe appear ſo dull and poor,
*Verſe* will ſeem *Proſe*, yet *often* on him look,
And you will hardly *need* another Book.
Had * *Boſſu* never writ, the World had ſtill,
Like *Indians*, view'd this wondrous Piece of Skill,
As ſomething of *Divine* the Work admired,
Not hoped to be *Inſtructed*, but *Inſpired*;
But he diſcloſing ſacred *Myſteries*,
Has ſhewn where all the mighty *Magick* lies,
Deſcrib'd the *Seeds*, and in what order ſown,
That have to ſuch a vaſt proportion grown;
Sure from ſome *Angel* he the *Secret* knew,
Who through this *Labyrinth* has given the *Clue*!

* A late Author.

*Strata via eſt, nemon' carpit duce, &* auſpice *tanto?*
*Quid juvat* Heſperidum *heu!* dives proſpectus *in hortos,*
*Si vetitum, ut ſacros, neque mens decerpere fructus!*
*Quis cunctas, animi felix, complectitur artes?*
*Quis rationem,* audax cautè, *ſuperevolat ipſam,*
*Æthereumque regit* certo *moderamine curſum?*
*Judicium ingenio quis miſcuit arte* Maronis,
*Nuſquam deficiens, nullâque in parte redundans?*
*Qui conferre poteſt quod non* * Davideidos *auctor,*
‖ Primævi *aut* meliùs *cecinit qui fata* Parentis,
† *Vel* Solymas *captas,* * *vel qui celebravit* Eliſam,
*Incipiat, ſed plura manent, quæ viribus* iſtis,
*Et tenui venâ nos ut majora,* tacemus.

* Couleius.
‖ Miltonus.
† Taſſo.
* Spencerus.

---

FINIS.

---

But what, alas, avails it poor Mankind
To *ſee* this *promiſed Land*, yet ſtay *behind*?
The Way is ſhewn, but who has Strength to go?
Who can all *Sciences* exactly know?
Whoſe *Fancy* flies beyond weak *Reaſon's* Sight,
And yet has *Judgment* to direct it *right*?
Whoſe *juſt* Diſcernment, *Virgil-like*, is ſuch,
Never to ſay too little, or too much?
Let ſuch a Man begin without delay,
But he muſt do much more than I can ſay,
Muſt above *Cowley*, nay and *Milton* too prevail,
Succeed where *great Torquato*, and our *greater Spencer* fail.

---

*The* E N D.

---

Thos Corie
54n/6 68.19

# AN ESSAY UPON POETRY.

BIBL. CANT. ACAD.

LONDON,
Printed for *Joseph Hindmarsh* at the *Black-Bull* in C[illegible]
near the Royal *Exchange*, 1682.